

TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND PLAN

TOWN BOARD PRESENTATION
JULY 3, 2013



PROJECT TEAM

Town of Pleasant Valley
Open Space Committee

Sandra Larkin
Rebecca Seaman
Meta Plotnik

Teddi Southworth
Ross Hartlipp
Don Sagliano (Town Board Liaison)

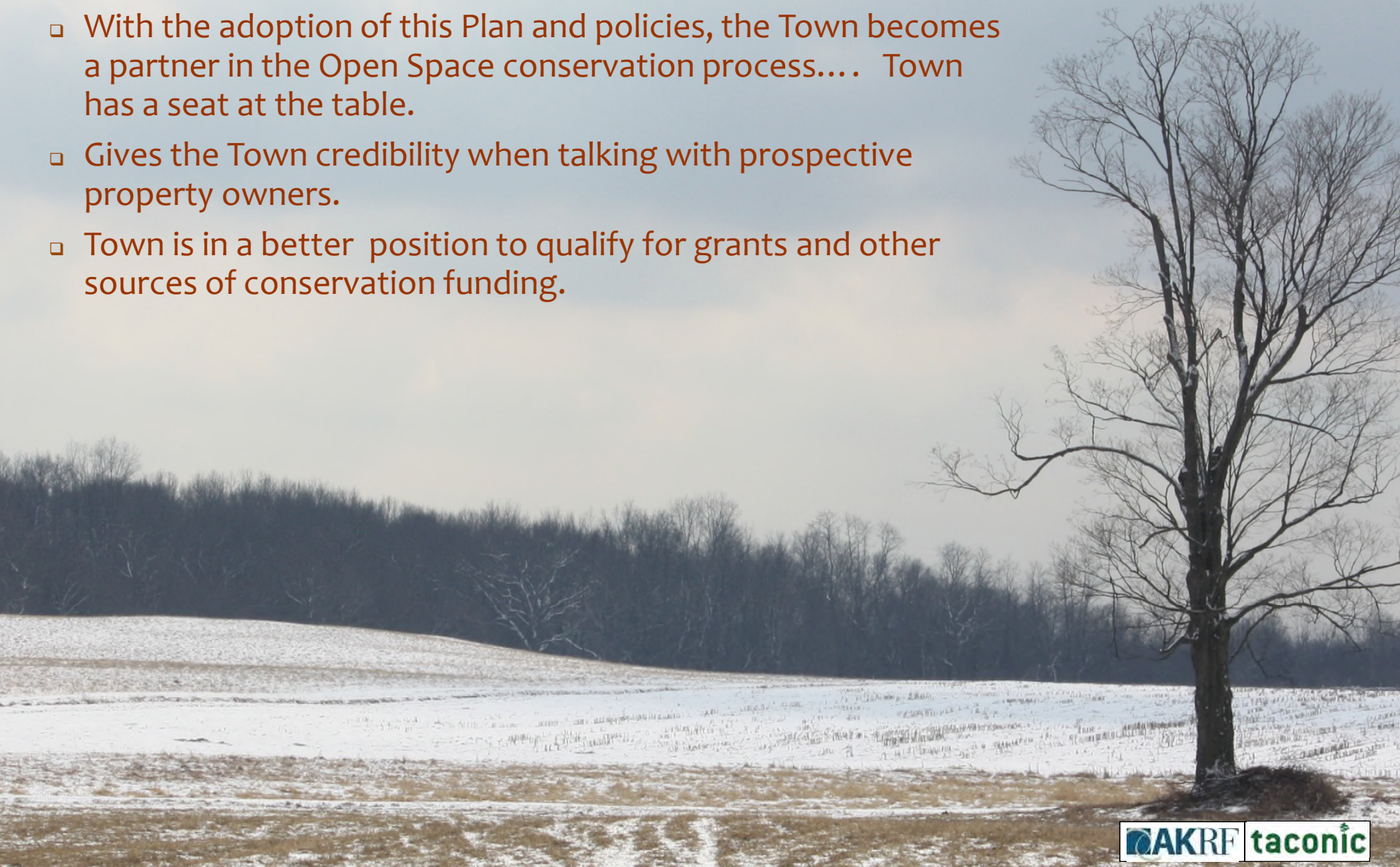
AKRF, Inc. | Nina S. Peek, AICP, Senior Technical Director

Taconic
Site Design & Landscape Architecture | Peter Karis, RLA, Principal Landscape Architect



WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT ?

- ❑ Open Space and Farmland costs the Town less than developed properties
- ❑ With the adoption of this Plan and policies, the Town becomes a partner in the Open Space conservation process.... Town has a seat at the table.
- ❑ Gives the Town credibility when talking with prospective property owners.
- ❑ Town is in a better position to qualify for grants and other sources of conservation funding.



“In many instances, it is less expensive for a community to maintain open space that naturally maintains water quality, reduces runoff, or controls flooding than to use tax dollars for costly engineered infrastructure projects such as water filtration plants and storm sewers.”

*Thomas P. DiNapoli
New York State Comptroller*

WHAT DOES THE PLAN ADDRESS?

- ❑ Water
 - Creeks, Streams, Wetlands, Aquifers and other special areas
- ❑ Topography
 - Slopes
- ❑ Land Patterns
 - Agriculture, Woodlands, Development
- ❑ Soils and Geology
 - Prime, Statewide Significant, Hydric
- ❑ Ecology and Biologically Sensitive Areas
 - Significant Biodiversity Areas (SBA's)
- ❑ Existing Areas of Conservation
 - Protected lands, Conservation Easements





Myths...

- The Town is going to take your land.
- That little bit is not going to help... there is nothing we can do.
- I don't get any benefit from conserving open spaces.
- Without development, my taxes will continue to increase.



Reality...

- Taxes from agricultural/vacant land are a financial winner for the Town
 - For every \$1 the Town receives in property taxes from residential lands, it spends more in services
 - For every \$1 the Town receives in property taxes from agricultural and vacant lands, it spends less in services



Reality... Economics

- Open space provides increased property values
 - Properties adjacent to open space and other conserved areas
 - Properties within or exposed to Scenic Areas



Reality... Climate Change

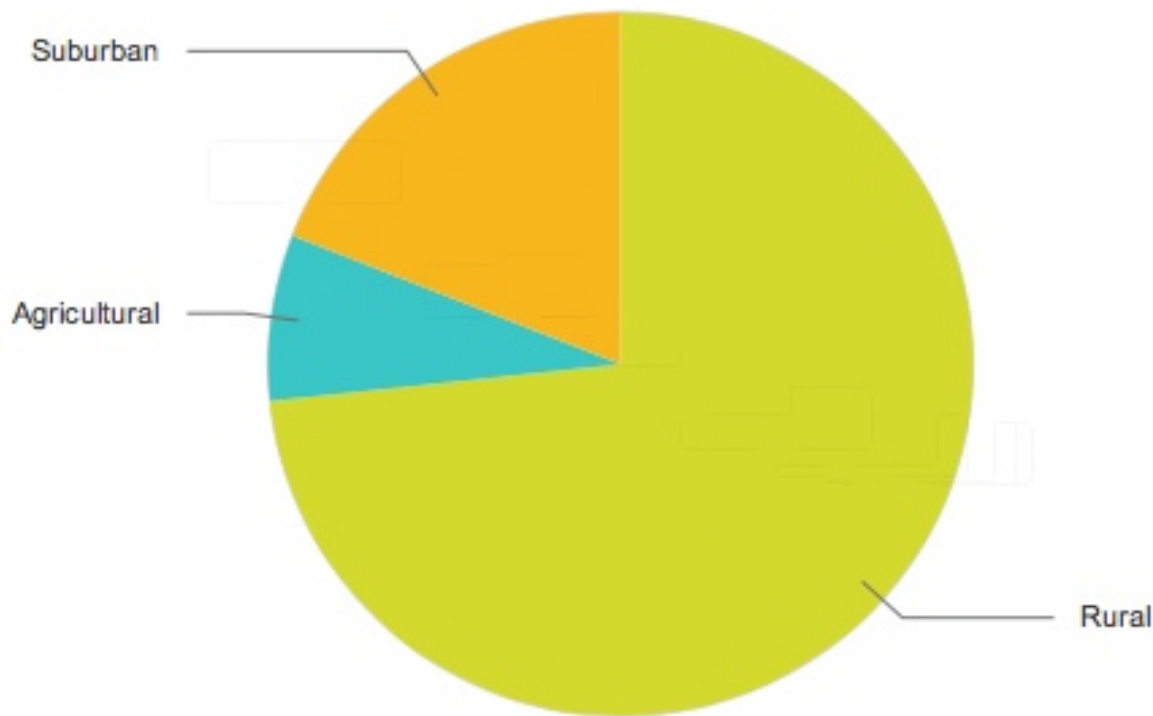
- Maintaining open spaces lowers our carbon footprint
 - Average annual temperatures are rising, CO₂ levels are rising and water quality is degrading

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD....

ON-LINE SURVEY RESULTS (JULY 3, 2013)

Which of the following adjectives best describes the character of the town of Pleasant Valley?

Answered: 105 Skipped: 0



105 Respondents

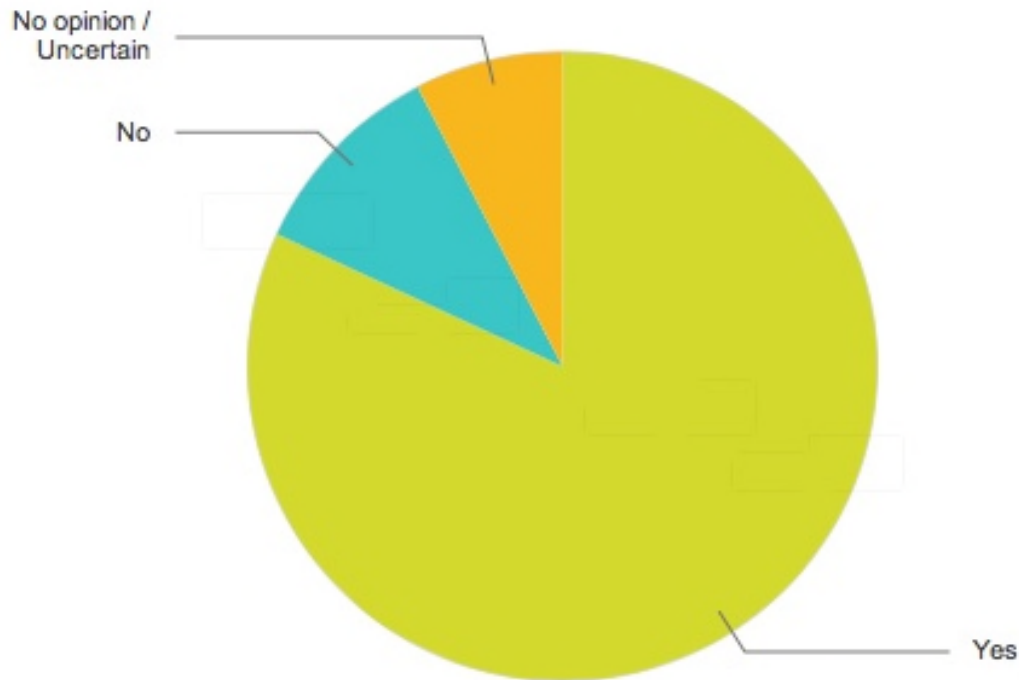
- 73 % characterize Pleasant Valley as RURAL

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD....

ON-LINE SURVEY RESULTS (JULY 3, 2013)

In your opinion, is it important to preserve the open spaces and farmland in the Town of Pleasant Valley?

Answered: 105 Skipped: 0



82 % cite the importance of preserving open space and farmland

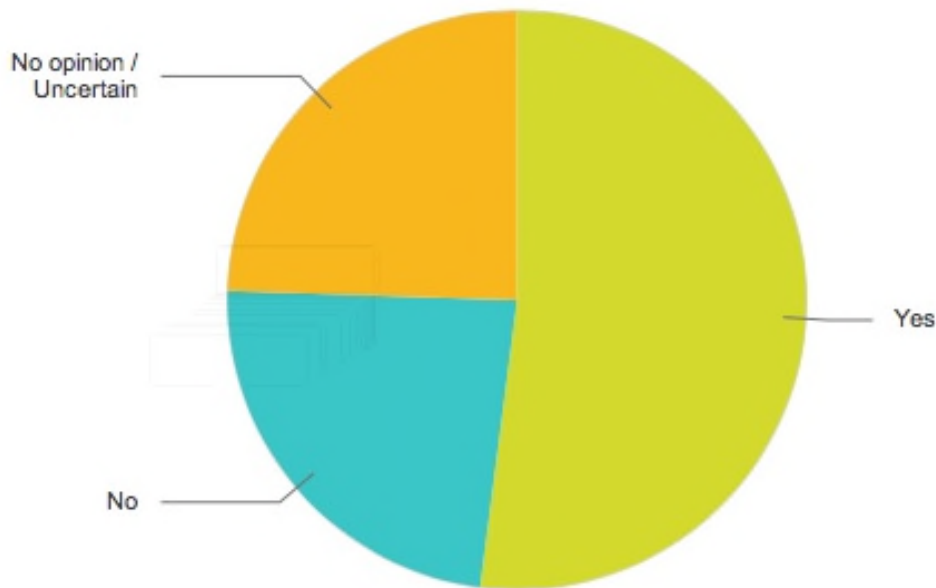
- 86 % of respondents who own or operate farms do not receive any financial assistance other than a tax exemption to help them maintain their farms

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD....

ON-LINE SURVEY RESULTS (JULY 3, 2013)

72 % of survey respondents to the Town of Pleasant Valley 2006 Comprehensive Plan were willing to finance open space and farmland protection through a local municipal bond. Would you be willing to support a local bond to fund open space and farmland protection?

Answered: 98 Skipped: 7



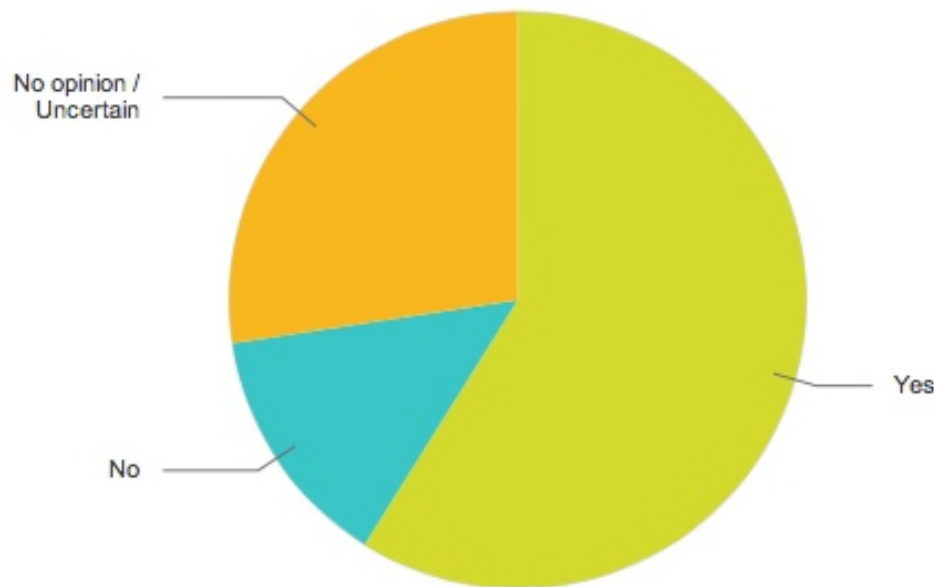
- Financing Open Space and Farmland Protection
 - 52 % would support a local bond effort to finance open space protection; 24 % would not, and 23 % have no opinion)

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD....

ON-LINE SURVEY RESULTS (JULY 3, 2013)

Would you be willing to pay an annual fee per household to support a fund for open space and farmland protection efforts?

Answered: 73 Skipped: 32



- **Financing Open Space and Farmland Protection**
59 % would support an annual fee per household (15 % would not, and 26 % have no opinion)
 - **31 % would pay up to \$20 per household, annually**
 - **36 % would pay up to \$50 per household, annually**
 - **28 % would pay up to \$100 per household, annually**

WHAT WE HAVE HEARD....

STAKEHOLDER MEETING (HELD ON MAY 4, 2013)

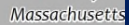
- Provide tax incentives for farmland preservation
- Adjust the rules and benefits for agricultural exemptions
- Flexibility in regulations to accommodate agricultural uses
 - Require buffer zones between farmland and residential development
- Adopt Right to Farm laws



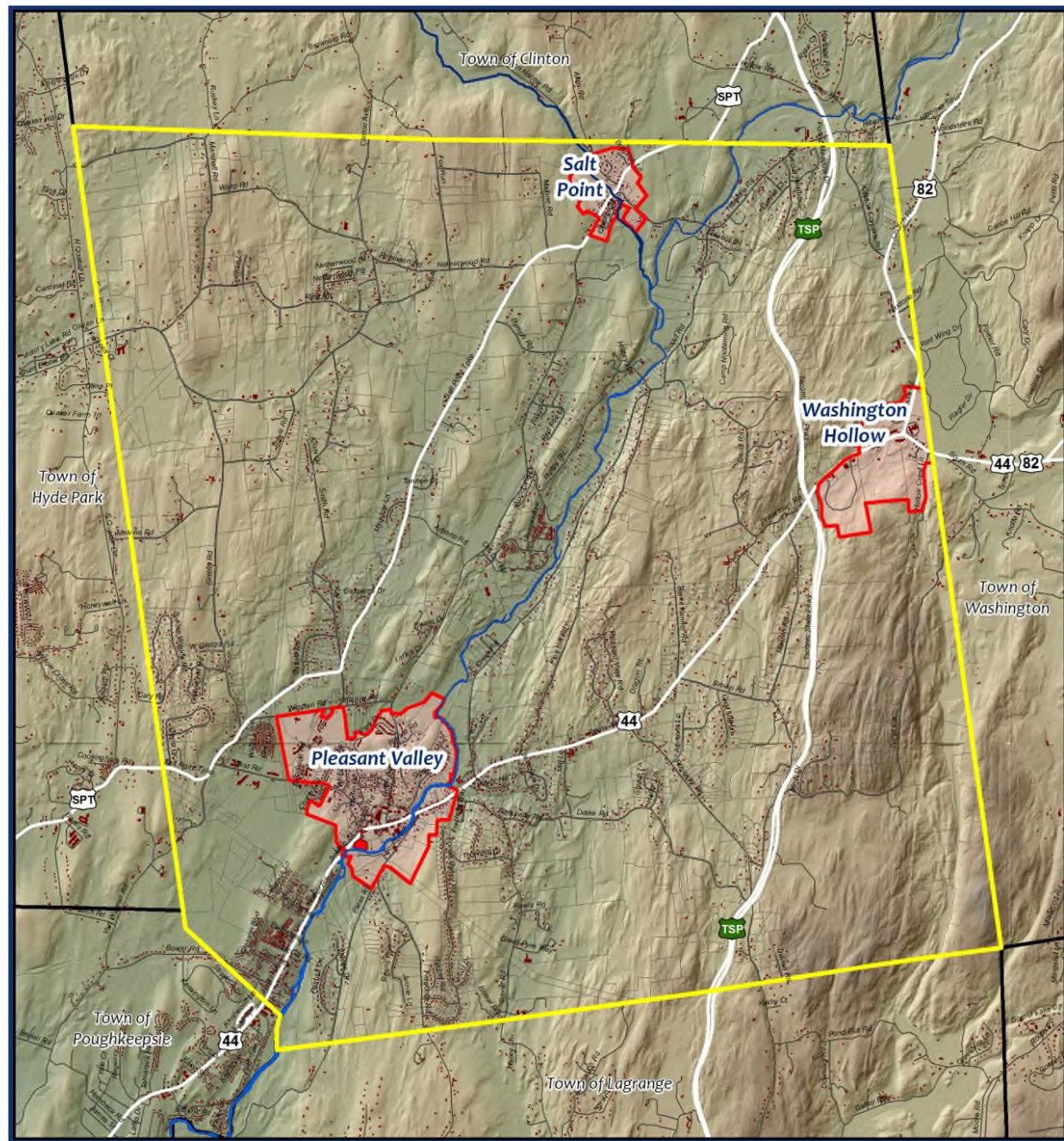


“Conservation, viewed in its entirety, is the slow and laborious unfolding of a new relationship between people and land”

Aldo Leopold



AKRF taconic



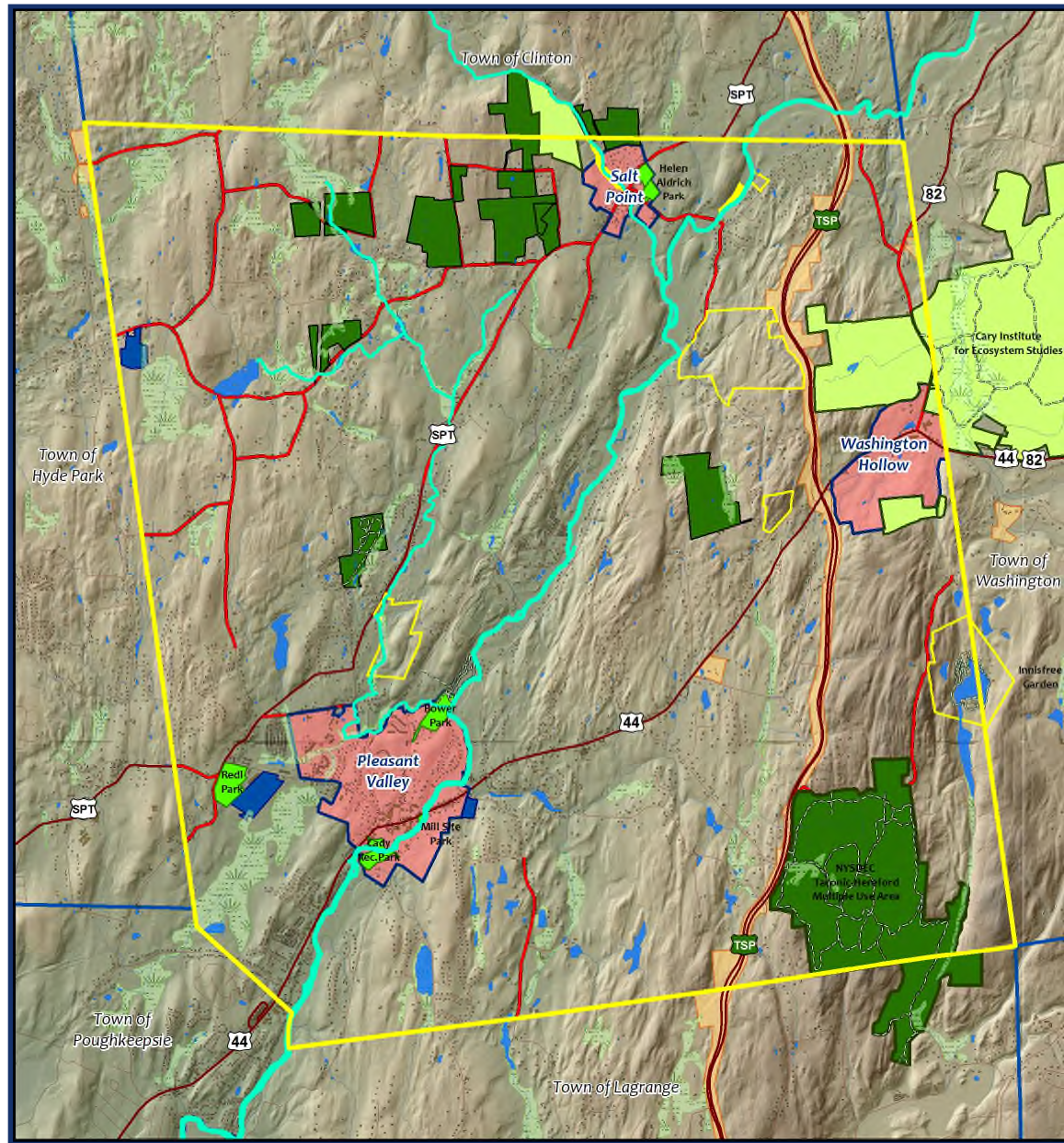
Pleasant Valley (2012)

- Town Parks
- Taconic Hereford Multiple Use Area (NYSDEC)
- Public School
- Other Town Owned Parcels
- Private Recreation Facilities
- Lands of Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies
- Conservation Easements (DLC)
- Scenic Roads
- Sites with Historic Status
- Water Body

Town
21,200 Acres

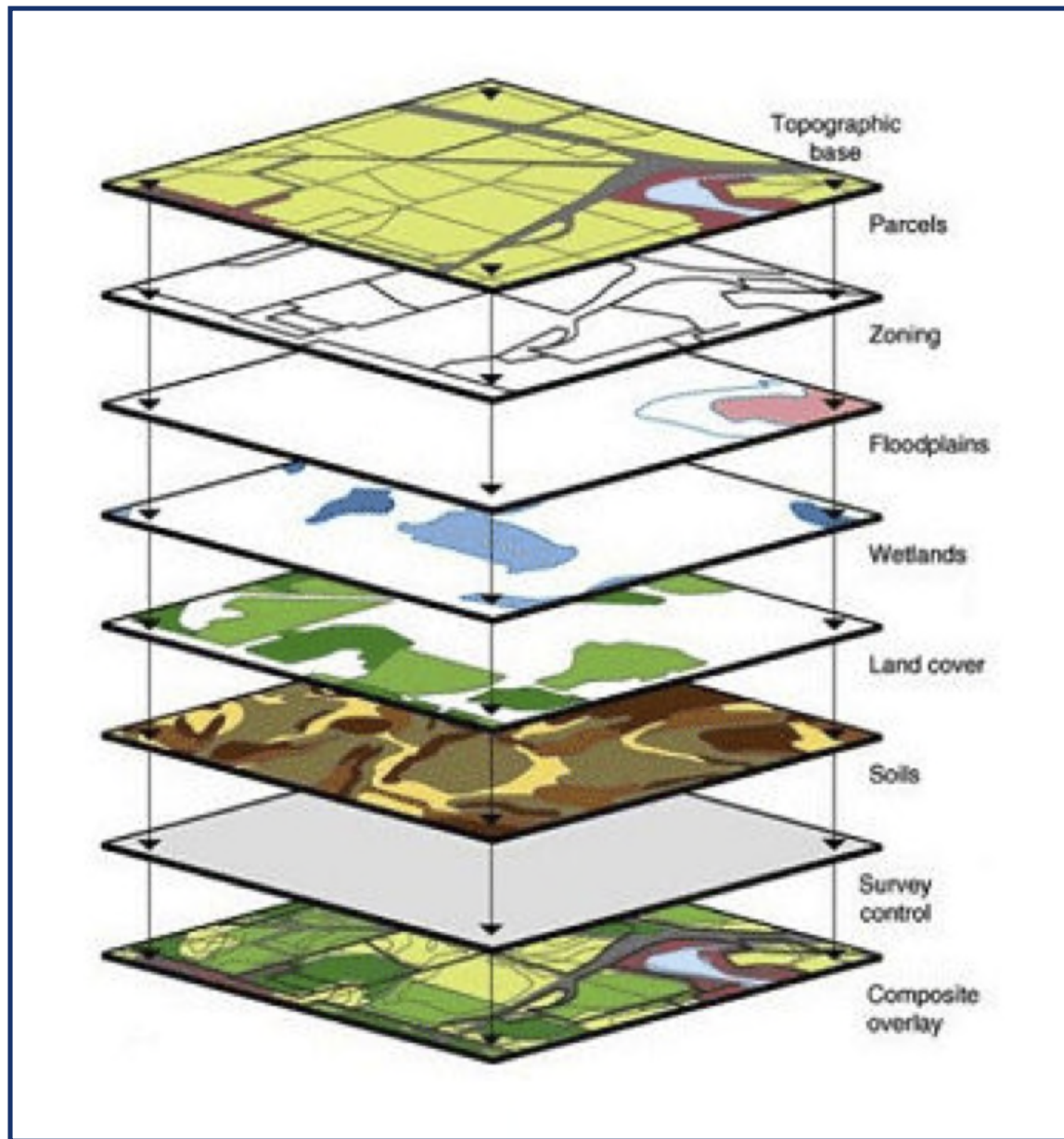
Existing Conserved Lands
1,690 Acres +/-
(Cary-381, NYS-770, Town-104, Easement-436)

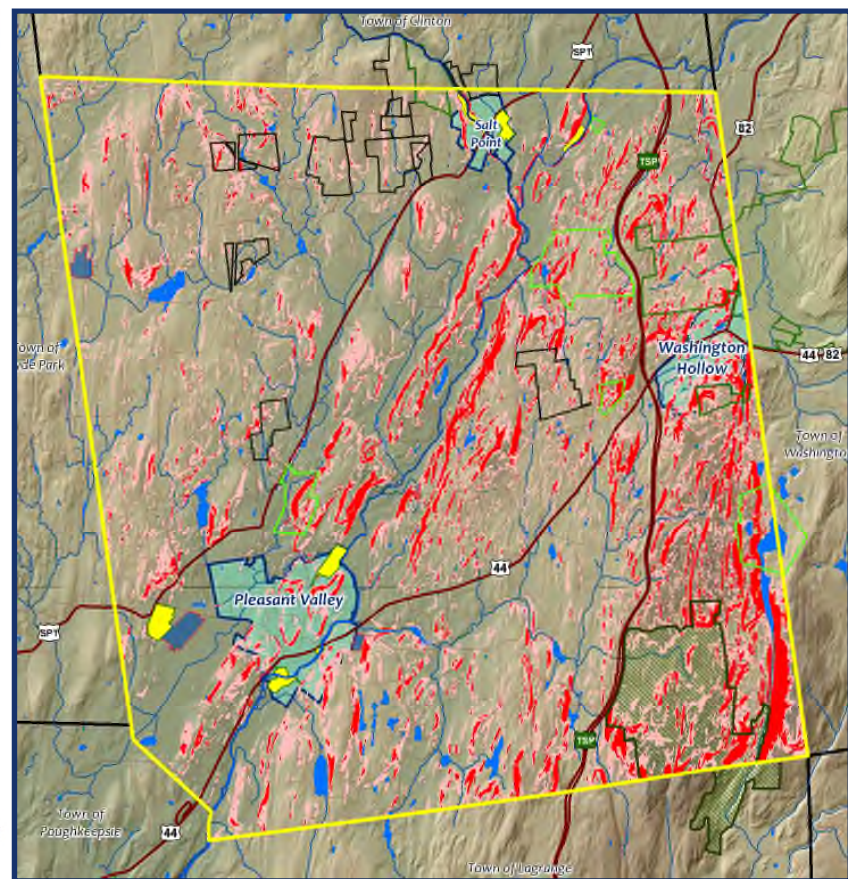
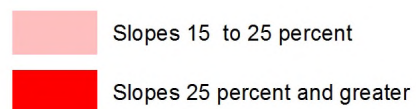
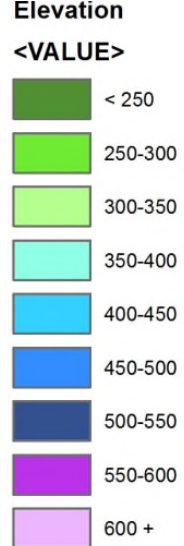
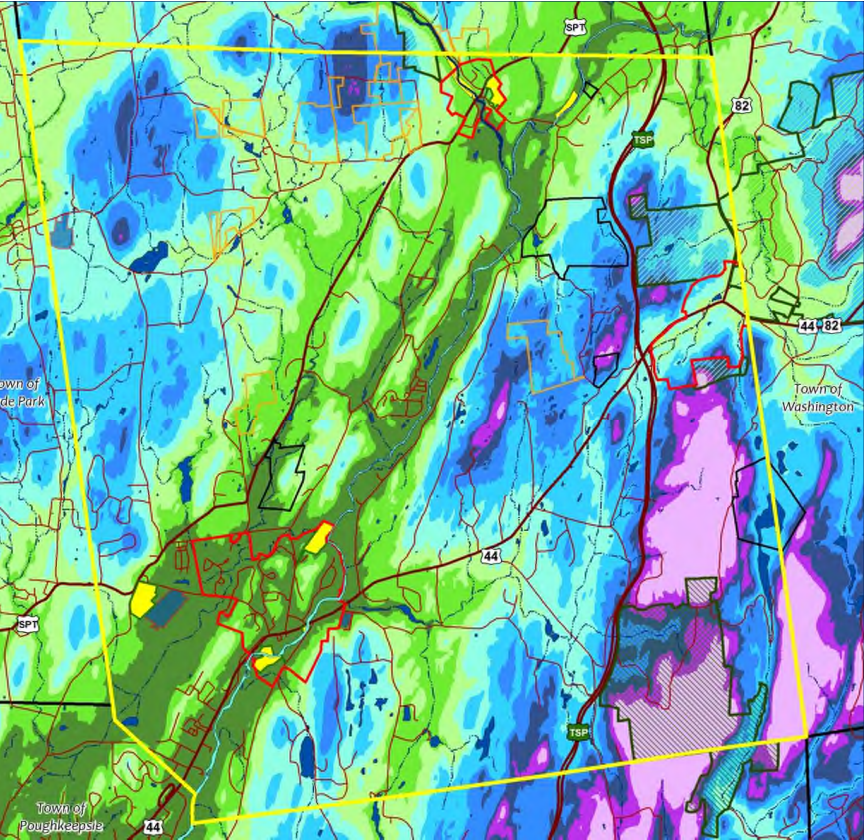
(8% of total land area of Town)



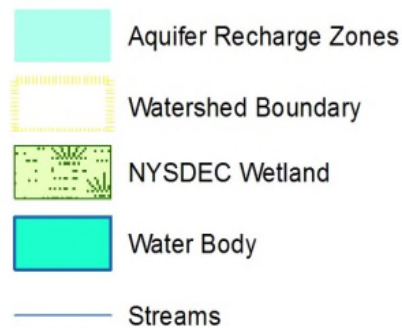
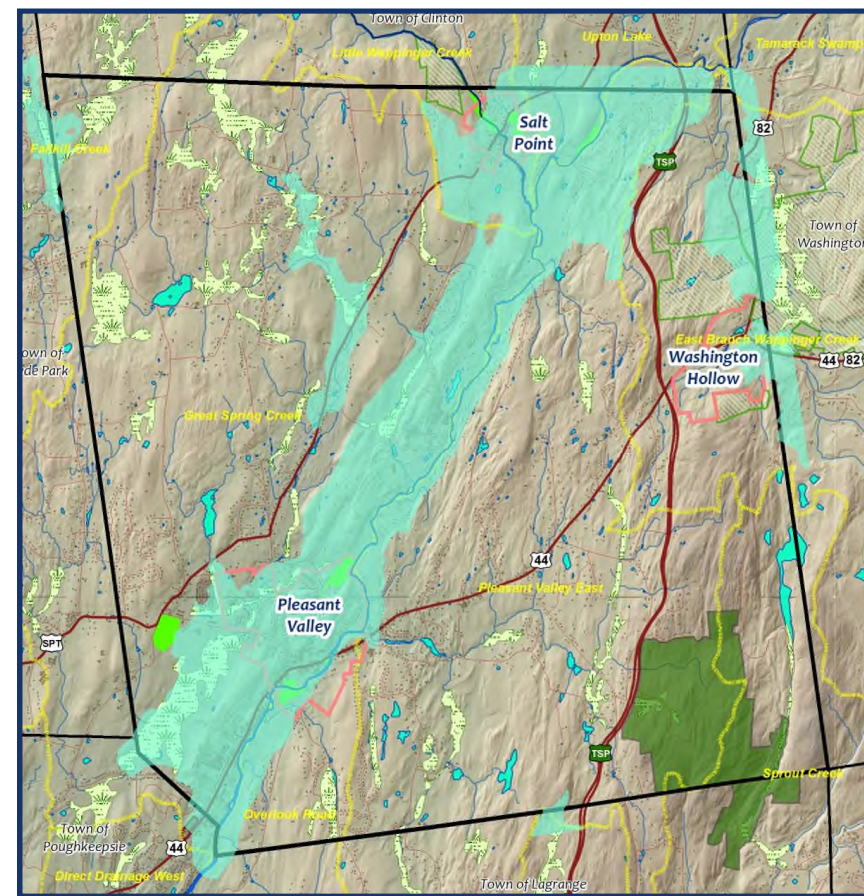
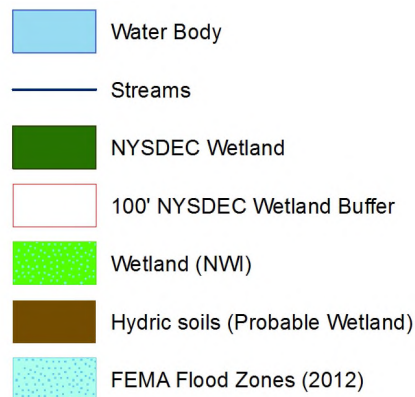
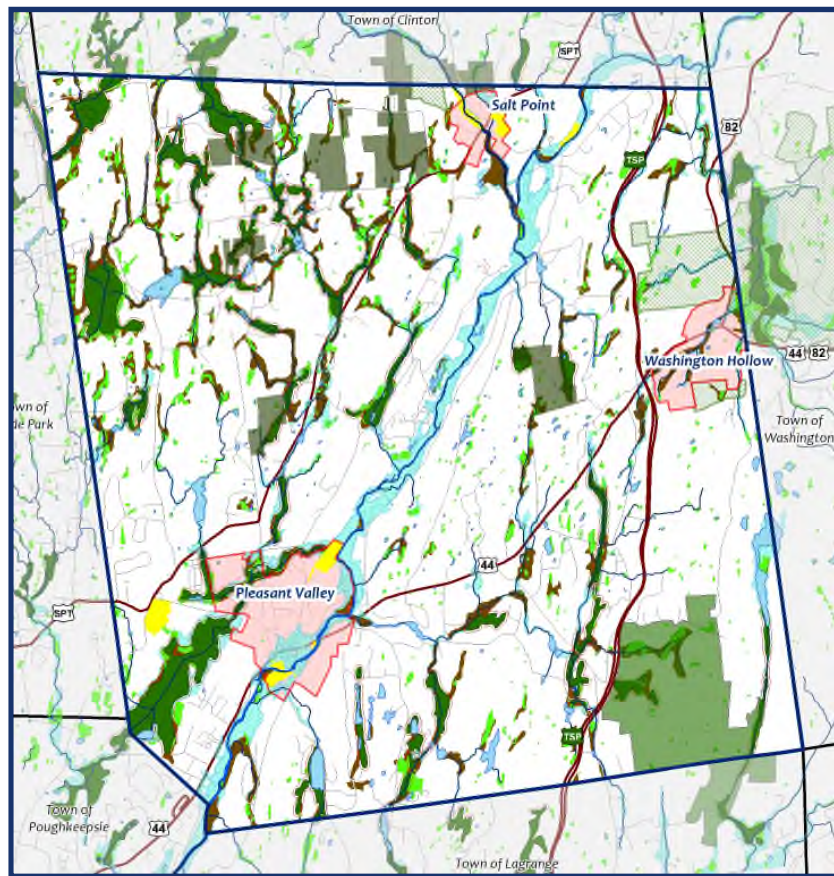
Existing Conserved Lands

What are we looking at?





Topography and Steep Slopes



Surface Waters and Aquifer Zones



Active Farms



Lands of Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies



Conservation Properties (DLC)



Agricultural Exempt Parcels



Agricultural Districts



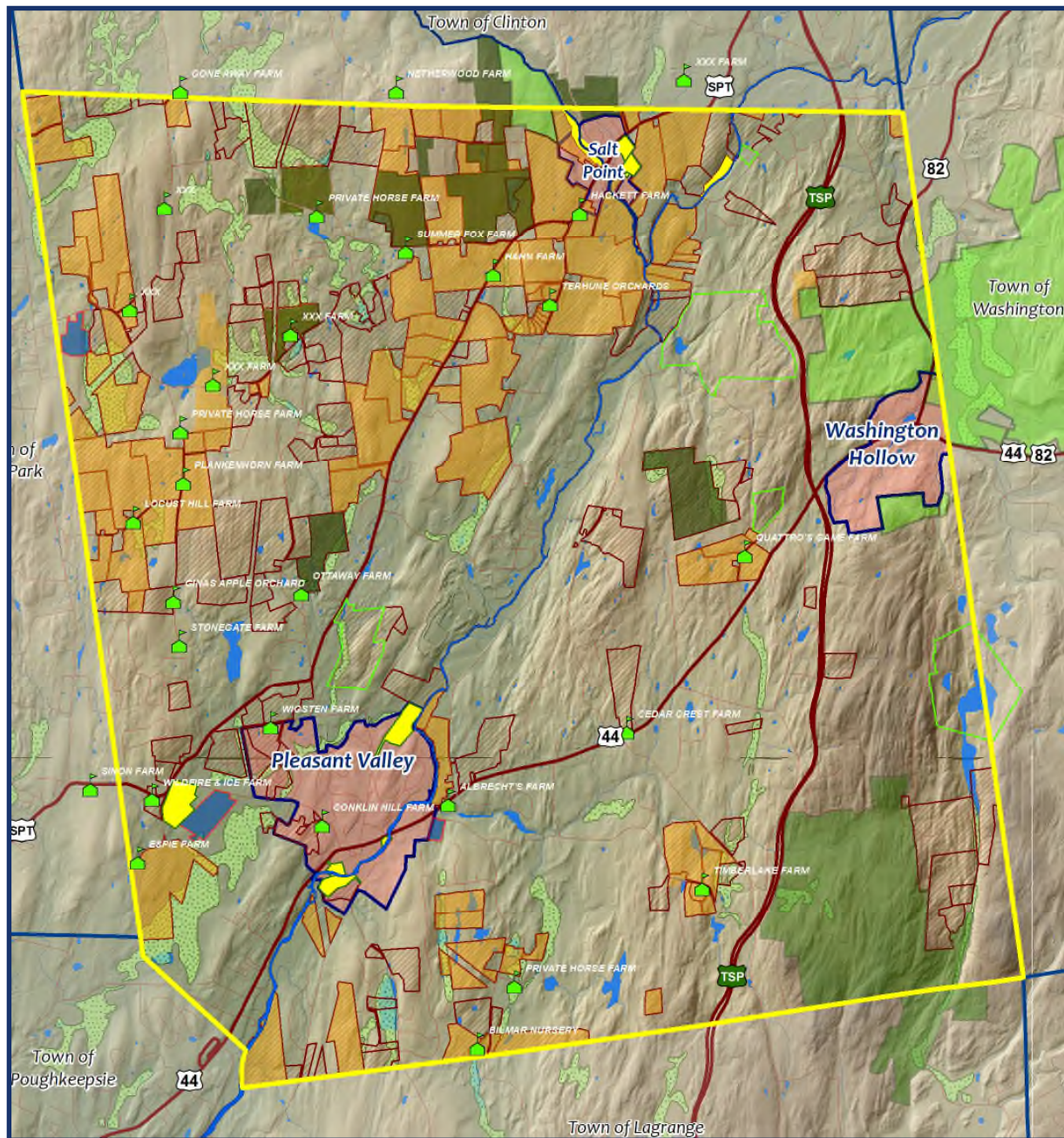
NYSDEC Wetland



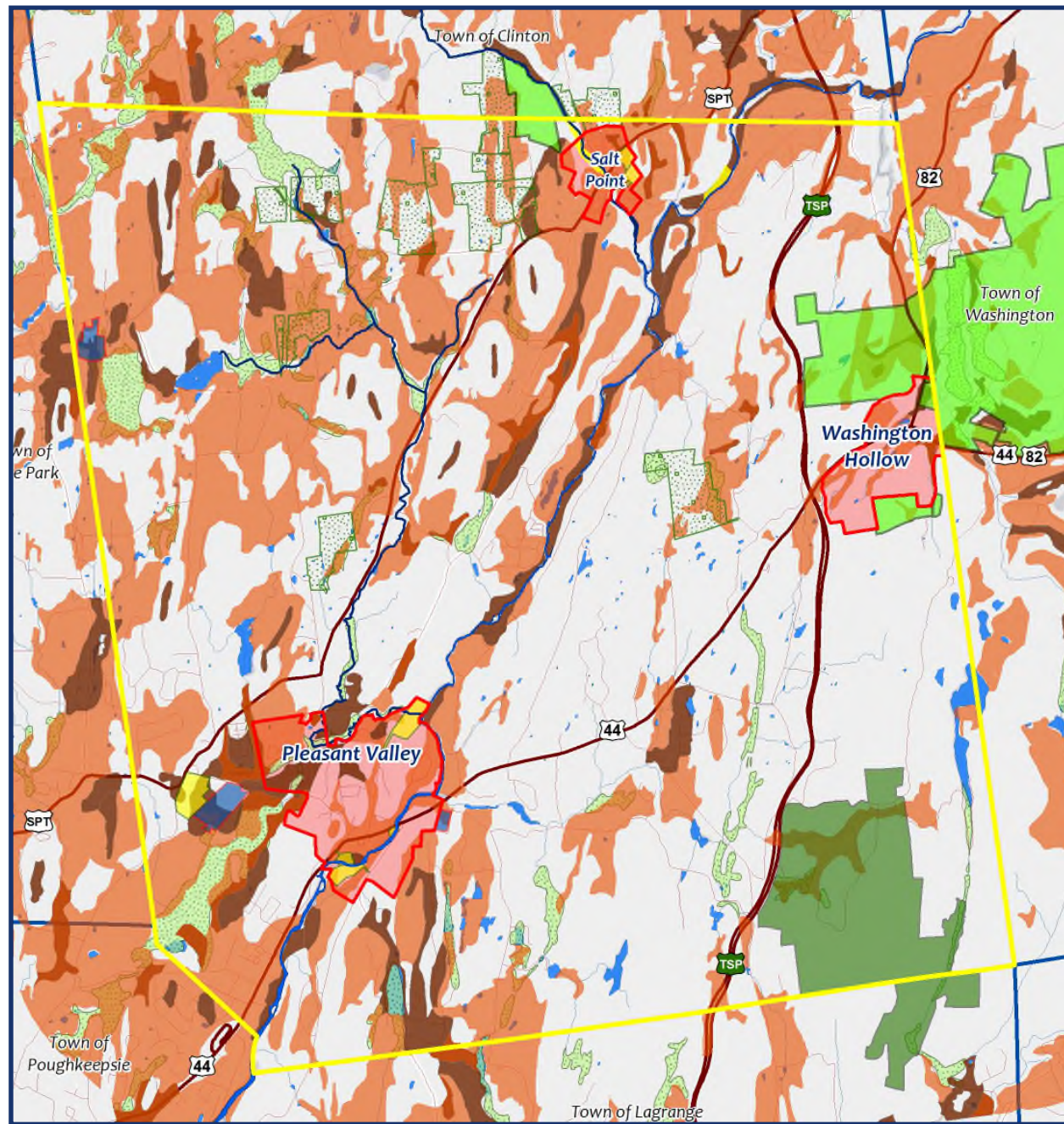
Water Body



Streams

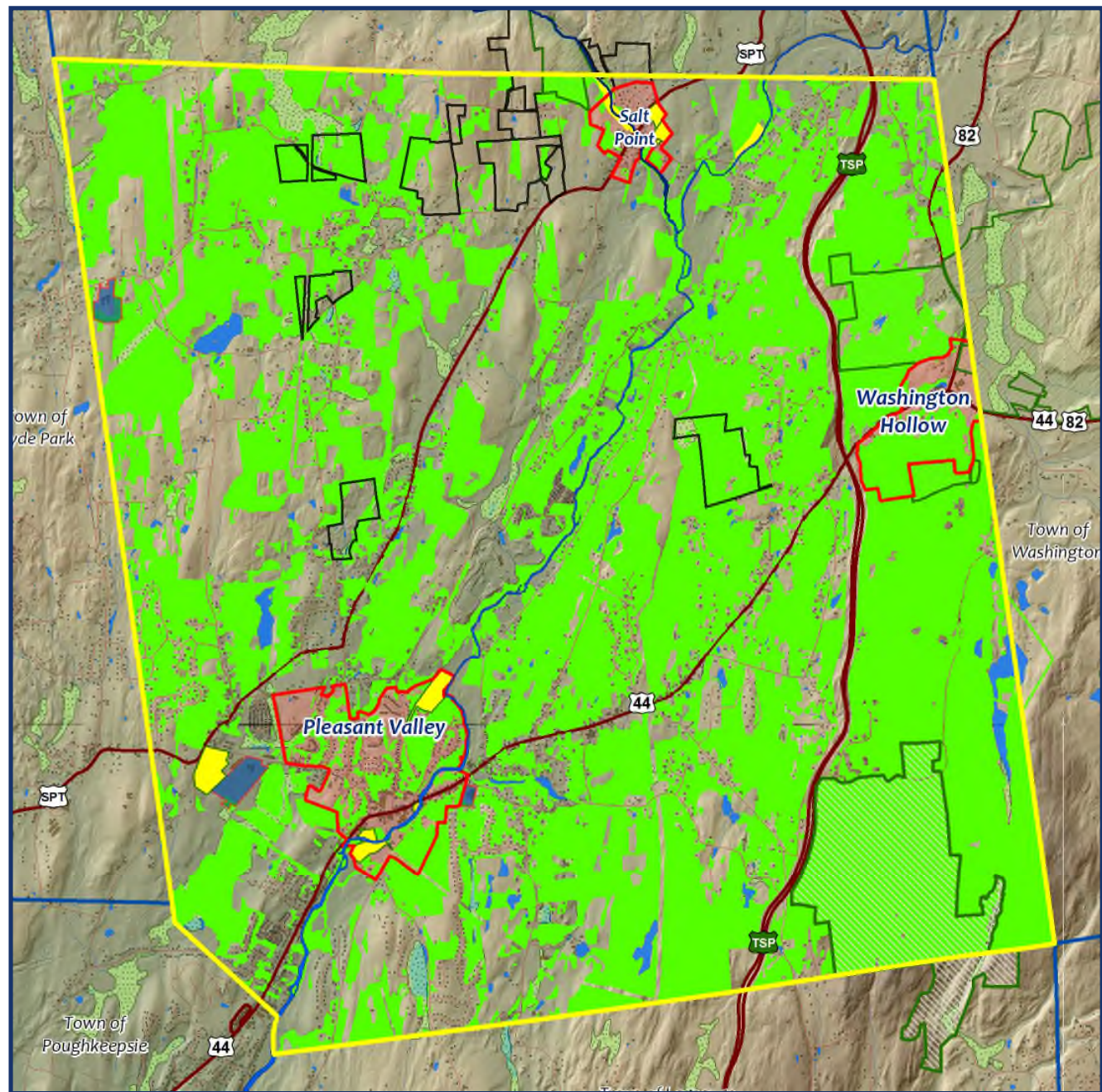


Agricultural Lands



Soils

-  Taconic Hereford Multiple Use Area (NYSDEC)
-  Private Recreation Facilities
-  Lands of Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies
-  Conservation Properties (DLC)
-  Forest



Woodlands

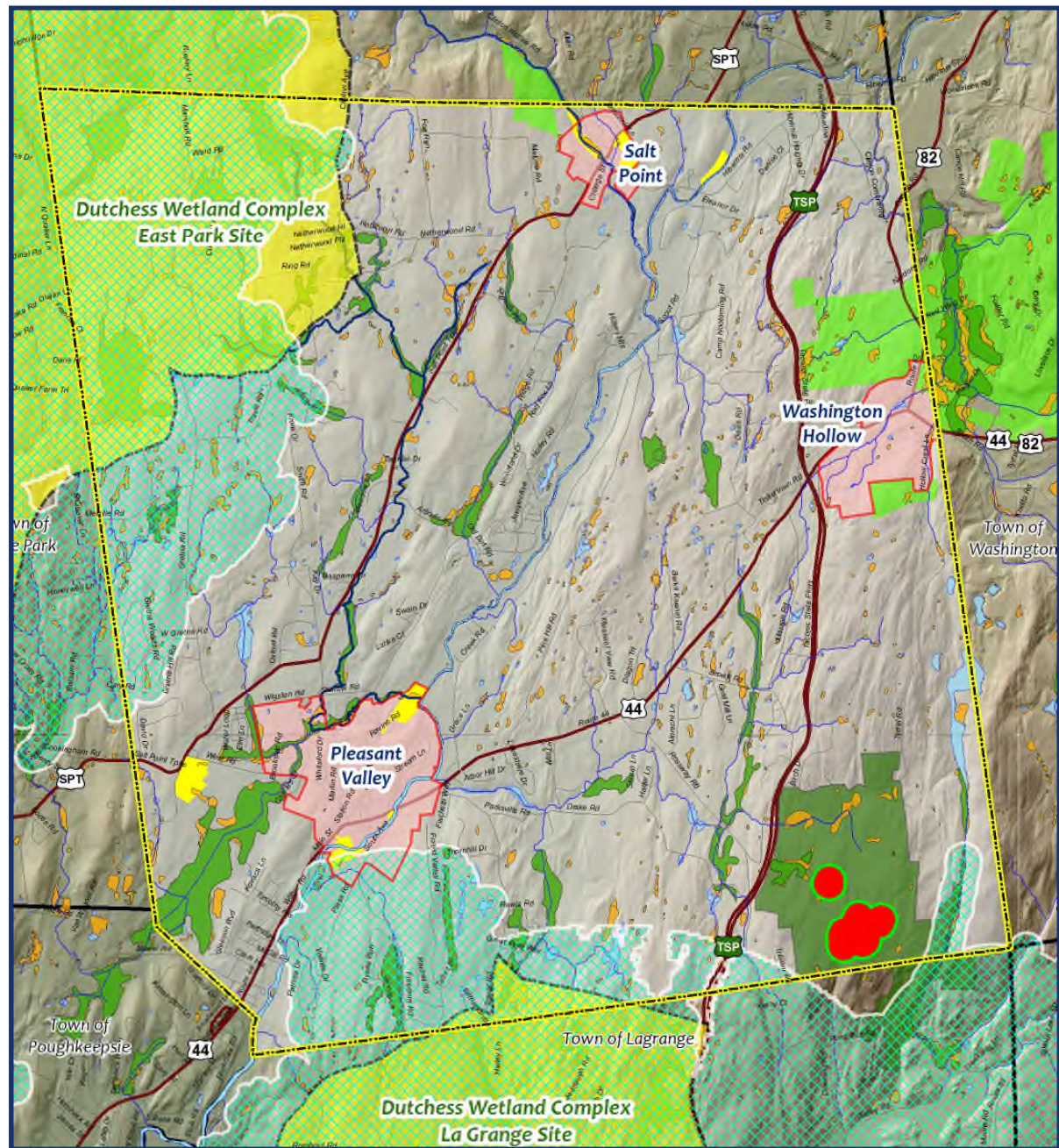
-  Significant Biodiversity Areas (SBAs)
-  NYSDEC Important Areas (Natural Community)
-  NYSDEC Important Areas (Animals)



Blandings Turtle

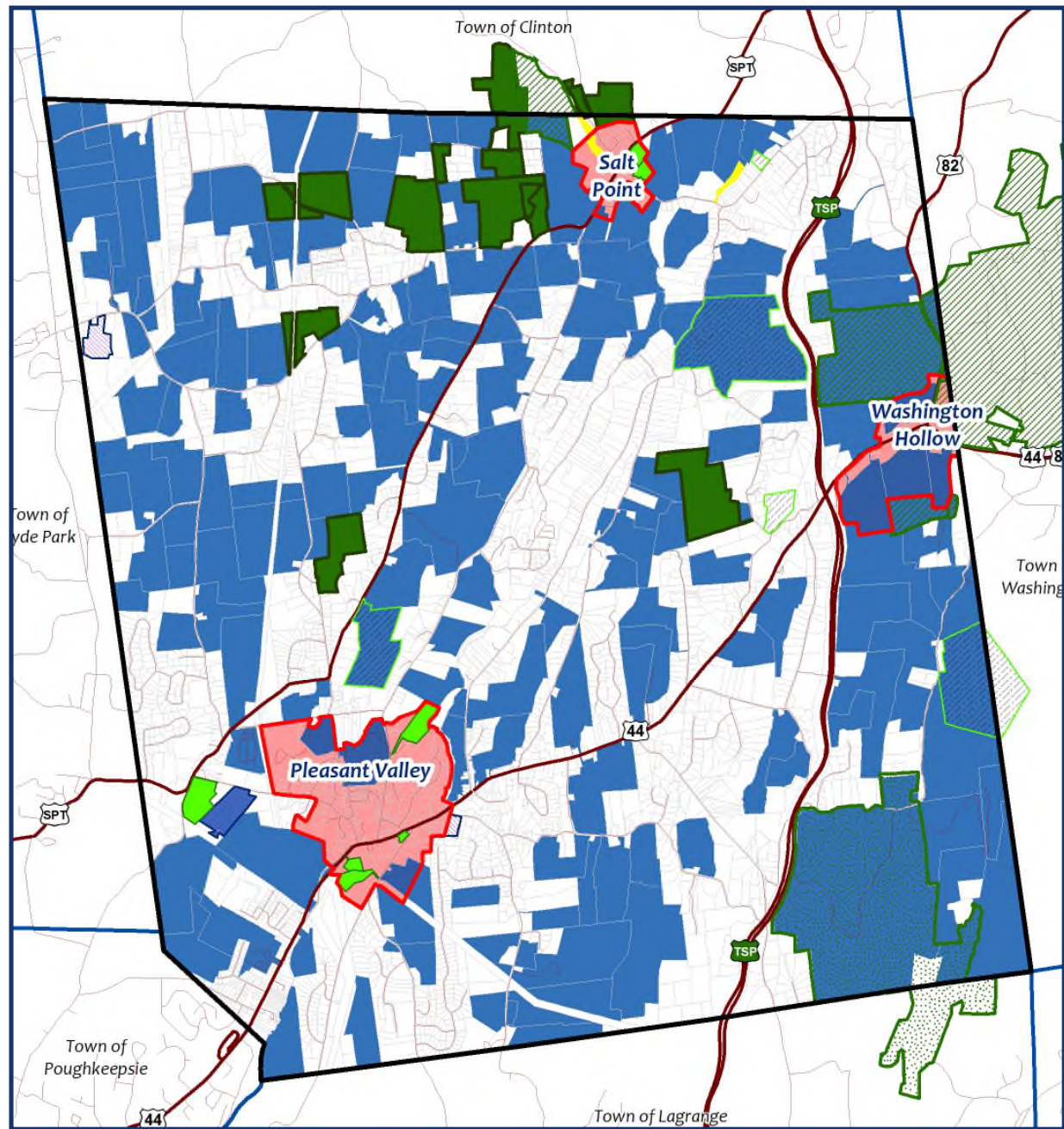


Bog Turtle



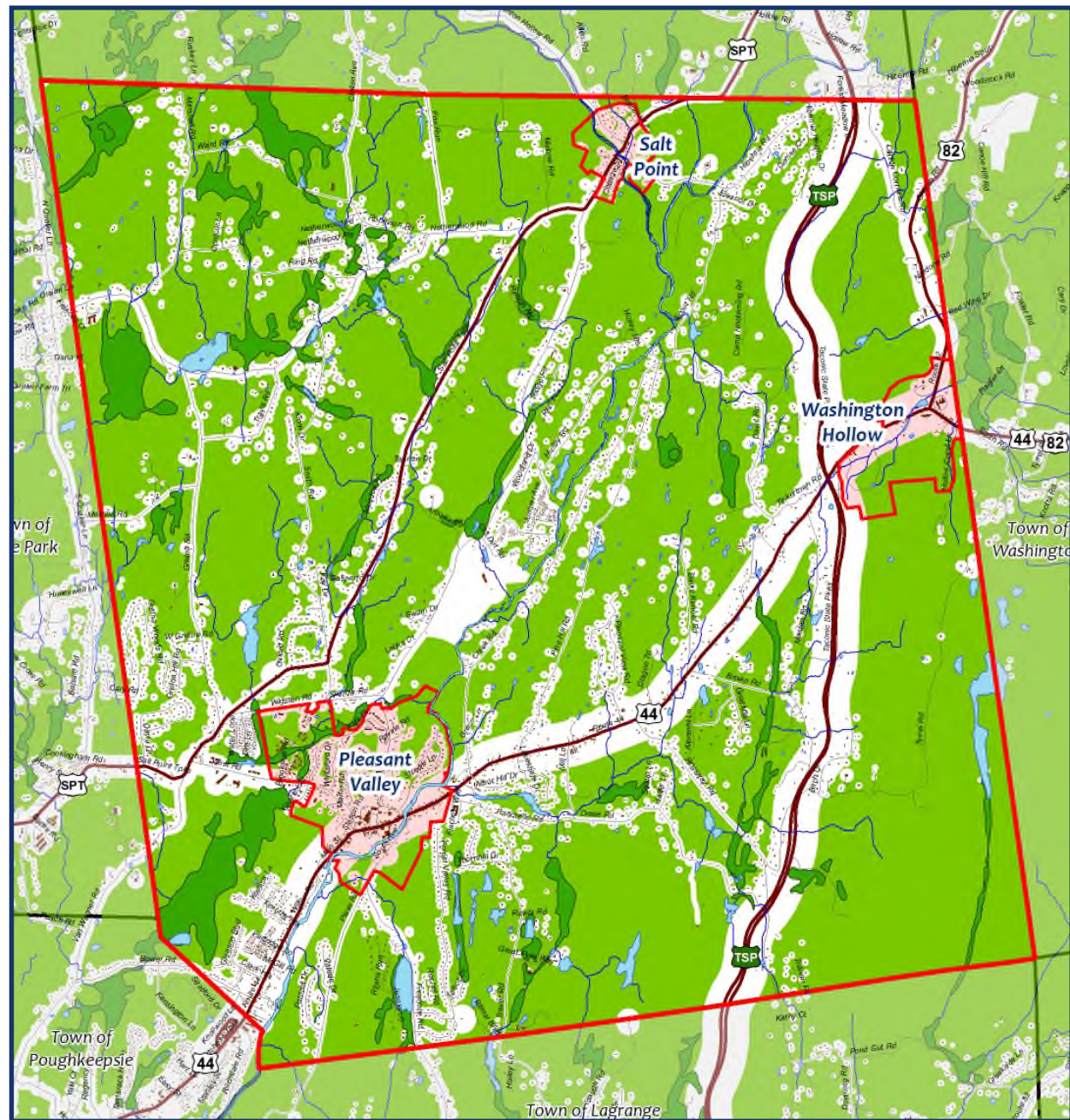
Significant Ecosystems Map

Parcels 50 Acres and Larger



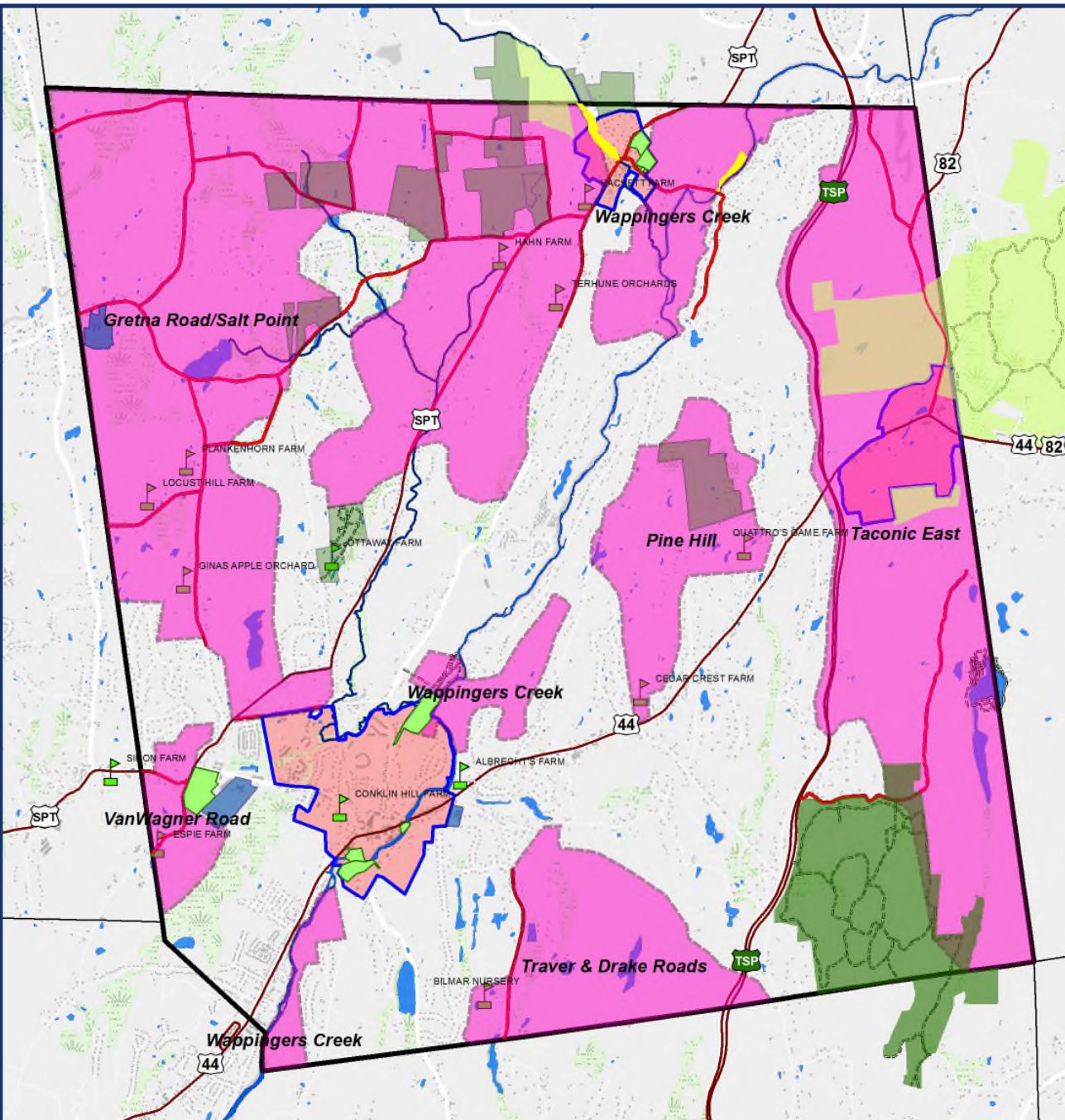
Parcel Size Distribution

Contiguous Lands (Habitat)

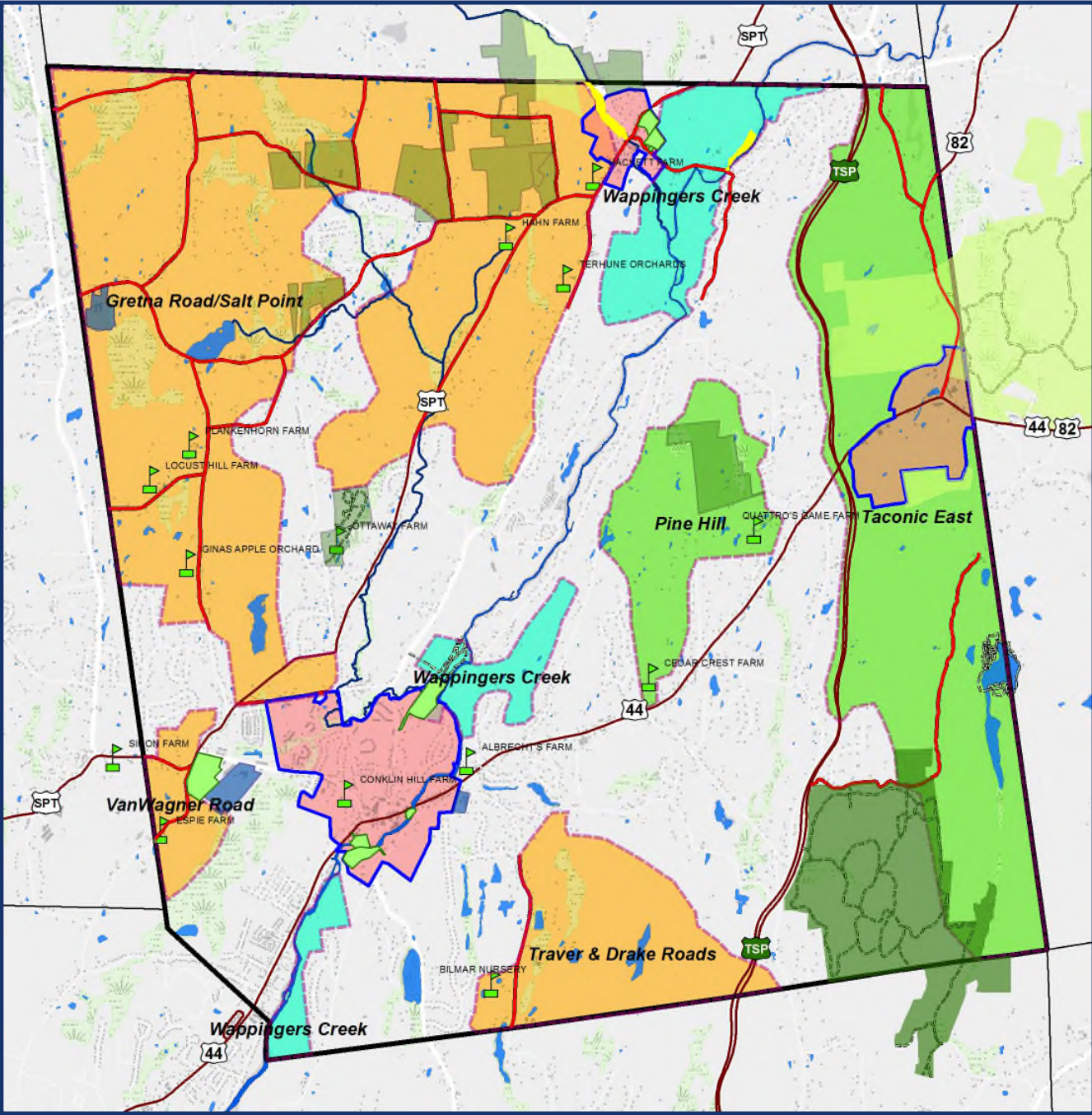


Contiguous Lands

 Priority Areas



Possible Conservation
Priority Areas Map



-  Priority Areas
-  Priority Area (Agriculture/Habitat)
-  Priority Area (Forest/Habitat)
-  Priority Area (Water Quality/Habitat)

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

▣ MAPPING AND TOWN CODE/ZONING

- Critical Environmental Areas and Pursue Designation
- Prepare a Scenic Viewshed Map and Scenic Viewshed Regulations
- Adopt Right to Farm Laws



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

▣ CONSERVATION FINANCE

- Create a Funding Mechanism for PDR/TDR Programs (already recommended in the Comprehensive Plan)
- Consider Open Space/Farmland Development Fees
- Consider Municipal Bonds

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

❑ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

- Develop and Promote Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to:
 - Prepare and Open Space, Farmland and Recreation Area Map
 - Prepare a marketing campaign for these resources, including brochures, posting on the Town and Regional Tourism websites

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

